ABEC215
Family and Community Contexts of Early Childhood
S1 External 2013
Institute of Early Childhood

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Rosemary Dunn
rosemary.dunn@mq.edu.au
Contact via rosemary.dunn@mq.edu.au

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
12cp and admission to BTeach(ECS)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit examines the concept of a family life cycle and explores some of the major changes that impact upon Australian families with particular emphasis on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Specific stresses associated with changes in cycles of family life are addressed. Within the framework of family systems theory, children and families in exceptional circumstances are also considered. Informal and formal family and community support services are examined, and the role of early childhood educators in contributing to this support is explored.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates

Learning Outcomes

1. Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.

2. Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding
and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.

3. Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.

4. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.

5. Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them.

6. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

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**Assessment Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Answer Questions</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6 March 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13 February 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families Resource Kit</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2 April 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Book</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7 June 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Prepared Assessment</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24 April 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Short Answer Questions**

Due: **6 March 2013**  
Weighting: **15%**

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.

- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding
and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.

- Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Seminar Presentation
Due: 13 February 2013
Weighting: 20%

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.
Families Resource Kit
Due: 2 April 2013
Weighting: 30%

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them.
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Work Book
Due: 7 June 2013
Weighting: 20%

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families,
issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.

- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Formal Prepared Assessment

Due: 24 April 2013
Weighting: 15%

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
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- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.
Delivery and Resources

Students are advised to access the detailed unit outline by logging in to ilearn. All readings and texts are outlined in the unit outline.

ABEC 215 is a three credit point unit. At Macquarie University it is assumed that each credit point should involve approximately 3 hours work per week. It is therefore expected that you allocate approximately none hours per week to this unit.

Attendance at both On-Campus Block sessions and participation in all workshop activities is compulsory.

Late submission of assessments without prior approval and supporting documentation will be penalised by 5% of the possible mark, per day.

TECHNOLOGY USED AND REQUIRED

It is expected that you will have access to a computer to access ilearn, conduct library and online research and wordprocess your assessment work.

CHANGES SINCE LAST UNIT OFFERING

Readings and texts have been updated.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html
Special Consideration Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/special_consideration/policy.html

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at: http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

UniWISE provides:

- Online learning resources and academic skills workshops http://www.students.mq.edu.au/support/learning_skills/
- Personal assistance with your learning & study related questions.
We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early
childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.

- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

**Assessment tasks**

- Families Resource Kit
- Work Book
- Formal Prepared Assessment

**Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills**

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
Assessment tasks

- Short Answer Questions
- Seminar Presentation
- Families Resource Kit
- Work Book
- Formal Prepared Assessment

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.

Assessment tasks

- Short Answer Questions
- Seminar Presentation
- Families Resource Kit
- Work Book
- Formal Prepared Assessment

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.
This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community. Develop an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
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- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.

**Assessment tasks**

- Short Answer Questions
- Seminar Presentation
- Families Resource Kit

**Creative and Innovative**

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them.
Assessment task

• Seminar Presentation

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.

• Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.

• Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them

• Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Assessment tasks

• Short Answer Questions
• Seminar Presentation
• Families Resource Kit
• Work Book
• Formal Prepared Assessment

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.
This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Develop skills to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

**Assessment tasks**

- Seminar Presentation
- Work Book

**Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

**Assessment tasks**

- Families Resource Kit
- Work Book
Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- Communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

**Assessment tasks**

- Short Answer Questions
- Seminar Presentation
- Families Resource Kit
- Work Book
- Formal Prepared Assessment